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After the Women's Dance was ended, the women participants broke up and each went back to her own lodge where she went through a final private ceremony. This,—and some other phases of Gros Ventre culture,—may be illustrated in the following story from real life, told by The Boy with hilarious laughter and with consummate histrionic artistry of intonation, gesture, facial expression and mimicry. Would that we could have gotten a sound-movie of it.

"It was the custom among all the tribes around here that when the old women had their Dance and it had ended they would go back to their tents and rest. Before they took a drink they would do like the buffalo does on going to water.

"Not long ago there died here a Gros Ventre man, named Hill (or Butte), who was famous for his ability to break wind, loud or soft, at will. He had a friend, a Blood Indian. On one occasion the Gros Ventres and Bloods got together, and a Women's Dance was held. Hill went to visit his Blood friend in the latter's lodge.

"After a while, when the dance was over, the Blood's wife came home, squatted down, said 'Phew' from fatigue, took off her dance regalia, and wiped the sweat off her face. Then she took an unborn-calf robe and laid it on her head, and put on her horned ritual headdress. She next gave her husband a wooden dish to fill with water and place in the lodge opposite the entrance. Hill, a spectator of all this, was a brother-in-law of the Blood's wife and hence had a right to joke with her.

"The old woman, then, in her dance regalia, got down on all fours, crawled up to the bowl of water sort of roaring like a buffalo going to drink, and as she reached the bowl suddenly shied away. This she did three times. After the fourth time she would have taken a drink, but just as she was about to drink, after the fourth approach, Hill broke wind loudly. At this the old woman just fell backwards, her headdress fell off, and she did not drink.

"Another Blood Indian present fell backwards laughing. Hill did not crack a smile. The woman's husband put his hand over his face and kept a stern demeanor until Hill said to him: 'My younger brother, don't get mad. All the tribes all over the

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514 522 796 country do what I did. When buffalo go to drink, Indians just shoot them. I was just re-enacting this. What I did was proper.' To this the husband replied: 'My elder brother, that's true.'

"When the people heard the laughing, they came flocking around. The other Blood was still laughing, in fact was in a laughing spell. His relatives carried him out and took him home and there dashed water on him and revived him."

Peyote Cult and Ghost Dance

668 795 What little we were able to gather on the peyote cult and Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, is here presented.

Peyotism is entirely lacking among the present-day Gros Ventres and appears never to have gained a foothold among them in the past. Some individuals, we were told by The Boy and Thick, had tried to introduce it, but without success as the Gros Ventres were "a little afraid of it." The fact that the Gros Ventres have been under fairly intensive Catholic missionary influence since the middle 1880's may partly account for the resistance.[43] Some young Gros Ventres, who were on a visit to the Crows, were invited to take part in Peyote observances, but declined.

On the fortunes of the Ghost Dance among the Gros Ventres, our chief informants were Cora Chandler and her husband Al Chandler, Coming Daylight, The Boy, Thick, Charles Buckman and Thomas Main. Singer had joined the movement but though perfectly willing to speak freely about other subjects was somewhat reluctant to talk about this one. Our other informants had not joined the Ghost Dance, but Cora Chandler's people "were strong for it." Coming Daylight was, as will be explained, in close contact with certain phases of it, and The Boy had been present as a spectator at many Ghost Dance gatherings.

[177] The Ghost Dance was called among the Gros Ventres, not "Ghost Dance," but "Little Round Dances." It was first introduced among them in 1891 by a Gros Ventre from the Hays area who had lived among the Arapaho of Wyoming a number of years, had

[43] Coming Daylight came in contact with the Peyote Cult on a visit some years ago to Oklahoma, but, she remarked, "the Catholic Indians in Oklahoma were against peyote."